



American Chamber of Commerce in India

Amcham Update

Focus: Corporate Social Responsibility

Amcham - The Voice of American Business in India

June 2013 • Vol. II • Issue 9

Chairman's Message



Mr. Lowell C. Paddock
President & Managing Director
General Motors India

American companies, apart from striving towards business excellence, have also been unwavering in their commitment to a social purpose.

India is now seeking to mainstream ideas and practice of Corporate Social Responsibility through the new Companies Bill 2012 which has a strong mandate on CSR and an earmarked spend on the same.

Amcham has always endeavored to work with its members companies ahead of the

curve and hence, during the Annual General Meeting 2013, Amcham constituted a Committee on CSR.

The member companies of the CSR committee have taken up various initiatives for a larger societal impact. These initiatives have made significant impact in terms of indirect job creation, sustainability, women empowerment, primary education, and water conservation, growth of private equity funding, improving the livelihood standards of rural communities, and

reducing the knowledge gap, through NGOs, Charitable Organizations and Foundations, thus contributing towards Indian society at large.

One of the initiatives under CSR is to seek support from American companies for a long term rehabilitation project in Uttarakhand and rebuild basic infrastructure on the ground level along with other projects to be collaboratively undertaken by the committee members shortly.

continued...

H I G H L I G H T S

- **Corporate Social Responsibility**
- **Companies Bill – Corporate Social Responsibility in India**
- **Amcham Events**
- **Amcham Welcomes New Members**

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Somdev Devvarmann
Tennis, India

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Dipika Pallikal
Squash, India



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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

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General Motors India

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Vice Chairman:
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Mr. Vivekanand Vanmeeganathan
Managing Director, Integrated Manufacturing
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Mr. Avinash Vashistha
Chairman and GU Managing Director
Accenture India Pvt. Ltd.
r. Ajay Singha
Executive Director

Amcham's focus, over the past two months, has been on building a comprehensive dialogue to make our programs, advocacy and initiatives more supportive and relevant for our members.

We organized a meeting with Former US Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright in New Delhi, where she spoke about "The Evolving Governance Trends and its Impact on Economic Activity". The meeting was chaired by Mr. Atul Dhawan, Chairman of the Economic Affairs committee of Amcham and Partner, Deloitte India and sponsored by Herbalife International India Pvt. Ltd.

To celebrate the successful conclusion of the fourth round of Indo-US Strategic Dialogue, Amcham hosted a "Fueling Economic Growth" business reception in honour of the U.S. delegation that accompanied U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. John Kerry, to India for U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue. At the reception, MOUs were signed by TDA for the grants they allocated to some companies. The Global Head of USAID, Mr. Rajiv Shah and the Head of NASA, Mr. Charles F. Bolden also participated.

We organized a Farewell Reception honoring Ms. Judy R. Reinke, Minister Counselor for Commercial Affairs, US Foreign Commercial Services, US Embassy in appreciation for the outstanding support and guidance provided to Amcham India.

The regional chapters were also actively engaged in organizing their regular events in their regions.

Amcham Eastern Chapter in Association with Hyatt Regency hosted a panel discussion on Inconvenient Truth – Saving Our Wetlands, a necessity, not an option.

The importance of Wetlands was extensively discussed along with the impact of the Wetlands on Climate change and the importance of the Wetlands on the livelihood.

We also hosted an interactive breakfast meeting and invited guest speaker Mr. Vikram Sen, IAS Principal Secretary, Tourism to speak on "Tourism in West Bengal."

The discussion highlighted tourism can be one of the primary revenue earners for both domestic and foreign earnings in West Bengal if the Government and Industry can put together a development package to improve the Tourism Sector.

Amcham India in partnership with LRN organised a workshop on 'Driving a Competitive Advantage – Values, Culture & Governance in Mumbai. The well attended workshop focused on How organizations can elevate behaviour — behaviour being the single most important differentiator for a company and brand in the 21st century marketplace. An esteemed panel which included (key note speaker) Mr. Mani Chacko, Senior Advisory Leader, LRN, Mr. Mahesh Krishnamurti, MD, Resources Global Professionals (I) Pvt. Ltd., Mr. Michael J Surface, Partner, PWC & Mr. Akhil Shahani, Director, Kaizen Private Equity shared their thoughts and experiences on the topic.

We organised meeting of the newly constituted Supply Chain & Logistics committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Anshuman Neil Basu, Regional Executive Director, Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals India Pvt. Ltd. in Mumbai. Senior representatives from the industry actively participated at the meeting to discuss and define the objectives, vision & activities of the committee as well as structure the next steps for active engagement of the members.

Amcham also organized a meeting with the Chief Minister of Kerala. This meeting was organized as a follow up to the Emerging Kerala investment summit meet held in September 2012. The Consul General Ms. Jennifer McIntyre led a delegation comprising prominent US companies operating in Trivandrum and Kochi for the meeting with the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister outlined the measures taken by the government to support US businesses in the state. A dinner reception was also hosted for the representatives of US businesses and the Consulate staff.

We encourage you to take time to browse through our website and portal – a great resource for businesses to look for upcoming events and Committees that may help you in seeking marketing and networking opportunities.

Once again, I thank you for your interest in our chamber. We promise to our members that they will see a well-defined value being our member.

CSR - A disconnect from Sustainability



Sarita Bahl
Director, Public Affairs
Pfizer

Last month in two encounters with Sustainability Officers on separate occasions, both happened to mention that as part of their job they also looked after CSR. It made me think. How can CSR and sustainability be different? What makes it different when they are a sub set of each other? What makes one view them uniquely when the whole focus is to create a sustainable, responsible action plan based on the principles of environment, social and governance (ESG)?

As one probes deeper, interesting definitions emerge.

Here is a snapshot of the emerging thought processes around CSR and Sustainability. The definitions, thoughts and ideas know no boundary. India, with its New Companies Bill poised to make CSR spent mandatory could well spend some time brain storming and ideating on how best CSR can add value to the whole sustainability dialogue. For, one without the other is an incomplete and futile conversation.

1. CSR is the umbrella

The debate on whether CSR is the umbrella or whether sustainability is the one under which the multiple layers of activities rest, continues. Sustainability for many brings with it the dimensions of environment and ethical governance. CSR is more limited to community outreach.

2. CSR is pro bono. Sustainability is a business case

CSR activities are directly linked to the funds attached to the act – and when the funds get withdrawn, CSR stops! Sustainability however is a business case. A classic example provided is that of community outreach being described as CSR whereas material issues of a company are categorized as those falling under the sustainability tag. Business concerns that could have a large financial impact take centre stage in the sustainability dialogue. What companies often miss by adhering to this categorization is the weaving of societal development that so often has direct implications to the financial wealth of the company. Surely, a narrow thinking as such can only further polarize the whole debate and understanding of the issue.

3. CSR is good PR

It is funny how CSR is often thought of to be a good PR exercise and sustainability not given its due coverage! If you want to build your reputation, do CSR! If you want to create a brand image, dip into your CSR activities. CSR will provide the brownie points. Maybe. Maybe not. What it will never give though is a sustainable value especially when CSR activities remain disassociated with business and have very little to do with empowerment and growth of all those involved.

4. CSR is a tool to achieve sustainability

Meeting society and community obligations is thought to be a key arm of sustainability and that is partially true since societal development is an important CSR indicator. However, in order to achieve that perfect balance, it is important that CSR is part of the overall sustainable strategy and not be used just as a tactical tool.

5. CSR is all about doing good

Social change is good for business and business is good for social change. But CSR is not just about doing good. It is also about doing no wrong, about not causing harm. It is also about managing the business ethically. It is about operational efficiency. It is about adhering to regulatory and legal challenges. It is about ensuring your supply chain adheres to your values. The doing no harm aspect is more often than not related to sustainability and not to CSR whereas the elements of it are all encompassing.

6. CSR is about employee volunteerism

Today, employee volunteerism is a big CSR activity in organizations and is linked with creating that 'feel good' factor among employees. This does not fall under the preview of sustainability! But employee engagement goes much beyond volunteering – it supports key human resource objectives of improved staff moral, reduced staff turnover, connection with corporate values and creating a culture of engaged employees. And that is very much aligned with sustainability!

7. CSR is not about ROIs

Many CSR activities are not associated with the bottom line of the business. The 'return on investment' concept is best left behind in the boardroom. This discontinued engagement with the business and non alignment with the strategic goals often results in haphazard

activities; the classic example that of adopting a village! Putting funds in such activities may fulfill the broader societal obligation role but with exit almost next to impossible, with no business models, with no alignment to strategic goals, this is one sure activity that neither brings in sustainability nor empowers the beneficiaries to take charge of their own lives.

There are definitions and definitions of CSR and Sustainability and the field continues to evolve. Organizations are free to choose and adapt one that works best for them but it is imperative they have one that creates value for the organization not only in respect of financial and business imperatives but

also factors in societal development and human resource indicators. In the end, no amount of doing good can ever help any organization if it is not ethical, if it does not have the right regulatory compliance structure, if it does not take care of the supply chain and if it does not ensure employees value the organization they work for.

CSR and Sustainability are inextricably linked. The sooner an organization imbibes both components as an essential way of doing business, the quicker it stands the chance of ensuring it does both – doing good and causing no harm.

beyond mere philanthropy and work towards addressing the root causes of social, environmental and economic challenges. Businesses have the resources and know-how to foster this change. Taking this realization and making a commitment towards sustainability is the first step towards corporate social accountability.

Integrating Sustainability with Business Strategy

No sustainable practice can survive without supporting the business agenda as well. The sustenance of the business is crucial to the sustenance of the society, just as it is true the other way around. Hence, CSR strategies must provide value to the company – whether it be an empowered customer or reputation building.

Building sustainable business practices requires interventions at the strategic level. One is faced with the task of integrating the sustainability agenda with the business agenda, such that there are positive returns for the company as well as positive impact on the society and environment.

Creating a strategy for sustainability within the company offers a framework to guide decision-making and agenda building. Working together with partners, directing resources towards the correct channels, identifying and implementing projects at the community level – these require innovative thinking and meticulous planning at every step.

The Power of Partnerships

Every business has a set of stakeholders which are integral and interlinked with its operations. Building sustainable practices is as much a matter of internal policies as of engaging the various stakeholders to partner in this process. From employees to customers, there is a vast opportunity for

Corporate Social Responsibility in India - Coke



Mr. Deepak Jolly

VP - Public Affairs & Communications
Coca-Cola India and South West Asia
Chairman - Amcham CSR Committee

Corporate Social Responsibility in India – building on strong traditions

Philanthropic practices have long been a tradition amongst entrepreneurs but as businesses have evolved over the decades, so have our sensibilities. With consumers and stakeholders increasingly looking at business not just through the lens of profits and sheer numbers but also evaluating the impact – positive and negative – on society as a whole, sustainability is the clarion call.

India's socio-economic environment is intrinsically linked to its business

landscape. This has long called for the need of a socially responsible corporate structure, whereby business needs to go hand-in-hand with the social, ecological and economic needs of the communities in which we operate. And now the 2012 Companies Bill goes to the extent of bringing, for the first time, CSR under the purview of a statutory provision. Although one may question if the mandates of law can truly convert social responsibility to social accountability, but it is undeniably crucial that CSR today become part of the long-term business philosophy. CSR practices, must look

any business to tap their stakeholders in fostering and enhancing their sustainability agenda. Each partner brings their own set of technical expertise, resources, knowledge and social sense to the table which can help enhance the reach, impact and success rate of any sustainability program

Moreover, the vast and diverse geography of our country calls for local understanding and insights. In this context, the most powerful tool for businesses to create real impact through their CSR projects is the power of partnerships. The trinity of Corporate, Government and Civil Society offers the varied capabilities and perspectives which are essential to create lasting impact. We call this the **"Golden Triangle"** – partnering with local authorities, NGOs, business houses and organizations offers a chance to explore innovative solutions to the most challenging issues.

A critical component to the success of any sustainability initiative is the local community and its buy in to the project. This takes heightened significance in a country like India where the community forms the core around which individuals and their lives revolve.

Building Sustainable Communities

Sustainable business practices must foster sustainable communities- offering incentives to retailers would help them in the short run; providing them the appropriate skills and knowledge would help them for life! The need for business is to rise above the concept of charity to capability-building.

A farmer's livelihood may depend on understanding a simple irrigation procedure, a child's education on the availability of appropriate infrastructure in schools, a woman's empowerment on her ability to be economically autonomous. Our business operations provide us with an opportunity to contribute to these solutions. Education providers can offer learning support, agriculture specialists can impart training in best practices and product developers can offer innovative solutions. This is the role of CSR that we recognize today – one which recognizes the responsibility of business to building sustainable and strong communities.

Conclusion

India's socio-economic fabric offers a great scope for corporate involvement in social development. Sectors such as healthcare and education have long been the focus of CSR activities. Corporate social responsibility offers the opportunity to make in-roads into fundamental

developments within such crucial sectors. One such example is the 'Support My School' Campaign, which run through a partnership between Coca-Cola India, NDTV and 20 other NGOs and corporate houses, and builds sustainable learning environments for schools in rural and urban areas. These schools not only create a "model" for the government to replicate but the Campaign also keeps the spotlight on issues around schooling and schools. The country is full of such examples, where the corporates have led positive change within communities – in partnership with civil society and governments.

Bill Gates termed it as "Creative Capitalism" – working together to reduce the inequities of the world. Whether CSR in India becomes a tool for change or lip service for corporate governance is eventually in the hands of the companies which are facilitators of this change. Across the length and breadth of the country, in numerous communities and innumerable lives, there is an opportunity to create positive impact. Every opportunity recognized is a step towards collective sustainability.

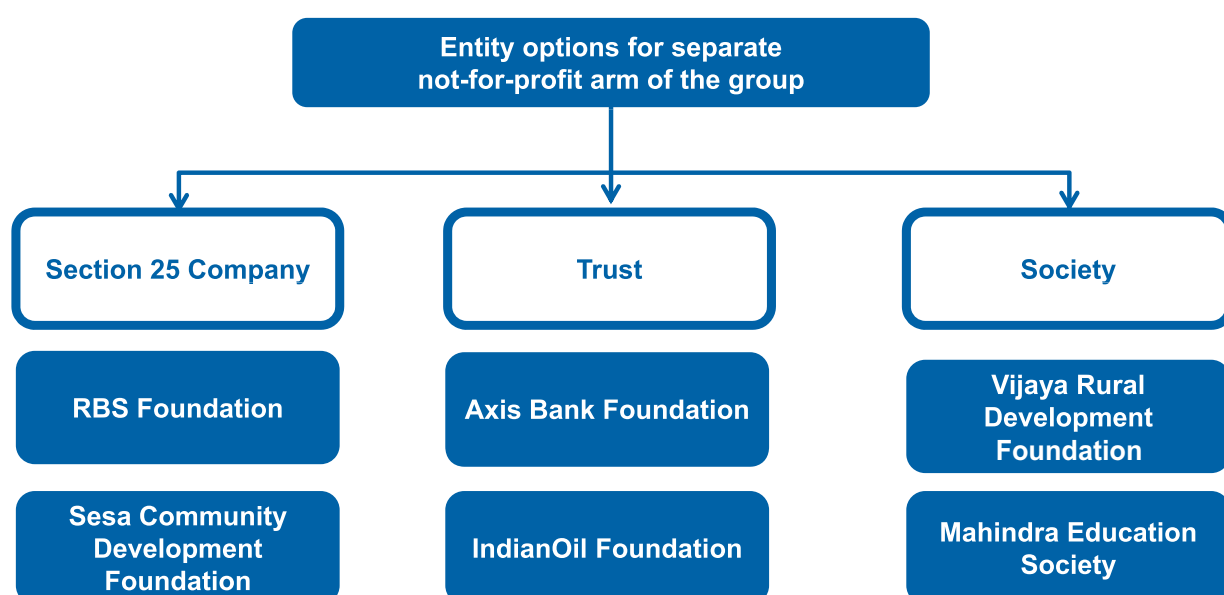


Companies Bill – Corporate Social Responsibility in India

What are channels are available under the Bill to spend 2% on CSR?

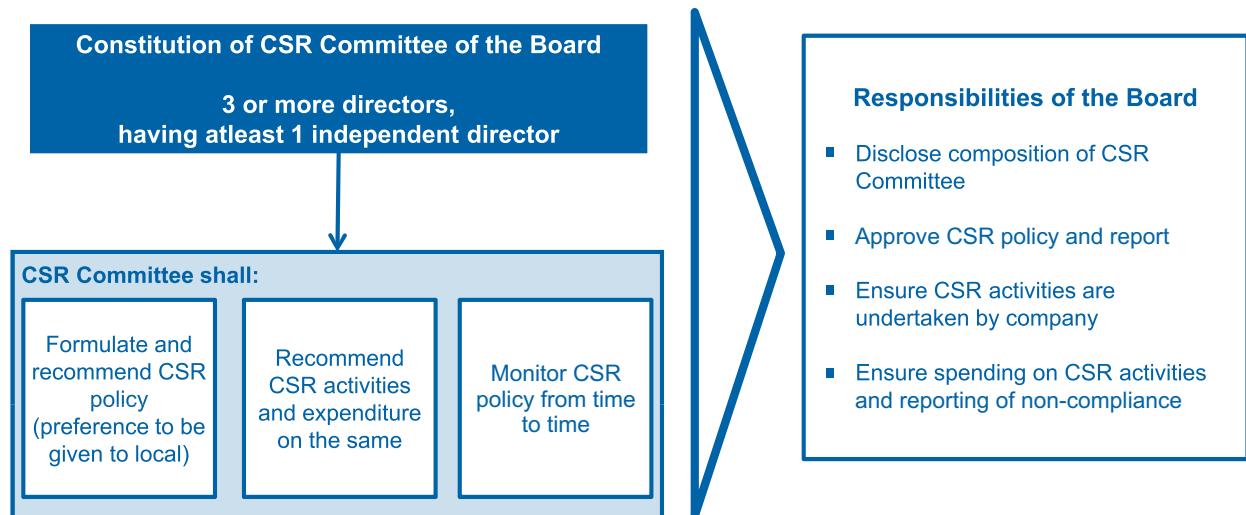
- In-house CSR activity – CSR activities to be carried out through company's employees
- Government Schemes / Independent NGOs – Company's can donate to government schemes or independent NGOs
- Not-for-profit arm of a group of companies – Corporate group forms separate not-for-profit arm to carry out CSR activities
- Clarity needed on:
 - Whether giving donation to independent NGO would be considered as CSR activity?
 - Whether CSR activities carried by the Not-for-profit arm of a corporate group can be considered as compliance by each company in the group?

What are the standard entity types available for Not-for-Profit arms?



Companies Bill – Corporate Social Responsibility in India

What are the norms companies must follow to comply with the Bill?



Are there any penalties spelt out in the Bill for failure to comply?

- Yes; though the bill states that companies are “expected” to spend...meaning it is not compulsory to spend money, the same bill provides that
- Board of directors will be responsible for seeing that company spends money for CSR
- It is compulsory to send report on the CSR-spending to the Corporate Affairs Minister
- If company is not spending money for CSR, it'll have to explain why they are not doing so
- Companies that do not report will face a penalty ranging from Rs 50,000 to Rs 25,00,000 or even imprisonment of up to three years

Companies Bill – Corporate Social Responsibility in India

What is the expected impact of the 2% CSR rule?

- Over 250 listed companies and vast number of unlisted companies will come under the CSR-spend requirement, mainly under net profit criteria!
- According to the Business Standard Research Bureau (Dec 2012): “BSE 500 firms will be required to spend over Rs 6,750 crore in the first year itself”
- “...the development could lead to about 30% increase in CSR-linked jobs. ‘The Bill will add not only numbers, but greater capability and depth to CSR roles. It will increase financial payout and positioning of the role in organisations.” - ET, Dec 28, 2012
- Expected annual contribution for CSR after the CSR provisions are enforced: GAIL - Rs 69 Cr, HUL - Rs 48 Cr, Infosys - Rs 138 Cr, L&T - Rs 85 Cr, NTPC - Rs 180 Cr...” - India Corporate Professionals, Companies Bill, Dec 2012”

Is it clear what activities fall under CSR in the Companies Bill?

- No, there is need for further clarification as to what exactly comprises CSR:
- Are incidental / indirect benefits to company’s employees or business regarded as CSR?
- If employees residing in local area benefited due to local area preference for CSR is it eligible for reporting under 2% criteria?
- Is quota for children of employees in school run by company, or its not-for-profit arm, CSR?
- Can meeting CSR obligation as a consequence of business activity be regarded as CSR?
- Is water management project carried on by a company as a business activity CSR?
- Are companies that manufacture eco-friendly products considered to be doing CSR?
- Are the CSR activities specified under Schedule VII of the Bill exhaustive?

Companies Bill – Corporate Social Responsibility in India

What further clarity is needed regarding CSR spending / calculation?

- Not clear how common business expenditure towards CSR should be allocated
 - How to allocate salary paid to manager devoting his time into business as well as CSR activities?
 - How to allocate lease rentals if premise is used for business as well as education purpose?
- Not clear if excess CSR spend of a particular year be carried forward and offset against CSR spending obligation in future years?

What are the tax considerations of CSR spending?

- ? Alignment of CSR activities with definition of 'charitable purpose' under Income-tax Act, 1961
- ? Deductibility of expenses towards CSR projects as revenue expenditure – Whether incurred for business purpose?
 - If expense deduction towards CSR project of 2% of average net profit available due to a statutory levy, whether expense incurred beyond 2% would be allowed as revenue expenditure?
 - If expense deduction not available, issues relating to allocation of common expenses incurred towards business as well as CSR projects?
 - If expense deduction not available, restrictive tax break (in form of 80-G deduction) available to company
- ? Is it permissible to claim depreciation on capital expenditure for acquiring assets used to carry out CSR activities?
- ? What is the taxability of donation made by third party to the company for furtherance of its CSR

AMCHAM EVENTS

Delhi

Interaction on Value of Project Management

Amcham and ESI International jointly organized an interaction with Mr. J. LeRoy Ward, Executive Vice President, Product Strategy & Management, ESI International, over breakfast on May 8, 2013 at New Delhi. Over 50 persons participated. Mr. Ward spoke about the 'Value of Project Management'. His talk was followed by Q&A from the floor.



Meeting with Mr. M.F. Farooqui, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications

Mr. Amit Sharma, Chairman, Amcham's ICT Committee; and Executive Vice President, President Asia, ATC Tower Company of India Pvt. Ltd., along with a few members of the ICT Committee called on Mr. M.F. Farooqui, the newly appointed Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, on May 15, 2013.



Meeting of Executive Committee of Amcham's Northern Region Council

A meeting of the Executive Committee of Amcham's Northern Region Council was held on May 15, 2013 at the office of Deloitte, Gurgaon.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Amit Sharma, Chairman, Amcham's Northern Region Council; and Executive Vice President, President Asia, ATC Tower Company of India Pvt.



Meeting of Amcham's Tax, Tariff and Regulatory Affairs Committee

A meeting of Amcham's Tax, Tariff and Regulatory Affairs Committee was held on May 15, 2013 at the office of Deloitte, Gurgaon.

The meeting was chaired by Ms. Neeru Ahuja, Chairperson, Amcham's Tax, Tariff and Regulatory Affairs Committee; and Partner, Deloitte Haskins & Sells.



Farewell Reception – Ms. Judy R. Reinke

The Amcham Secretariat in Delhi organized a Farewell Reception honoring Ms. Judy R. Reinke, Minister Counselor for Commercial Affairs, US Foreign Commercial Services, US Embassy in appreciation for the outstanding support and guidance provided to Amcham India, on May 29, 2013.

AMCHAM EVENTS

Meeting with Ms. Madeleine Albright, Former US Secretary of State

Amcham organized a breakfast meeting with Former US Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright on June 17, 2013.

Secretary Albright spoke about "The Evolving Governance Trends and its Impact on Economic Activity" which was followed by an interaction with participants.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Atul Dhawan, Chairman of the Economic Affairs committee of Amcham and Partner, Deloitte India and sponsored by Herbalife International India Pvt. Ltd.

Reception in honour of U.S. delegation to India for U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue

To celebrate the successful conclusion of the fourth round of Strategic Dialogue, Amcham hosted a "Fueling Economic Growth" business reception on 24th June 2013 in New Delhi in honour of the U.S. delegation that accompanied U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. John Kerry, to India for U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue. On this occasion, MOUs were signed by TDA for the grants they allocated to some companies.



APCAC Doorknock 2013

APCAC 2013 Doorknock was held from June 11-13, 2013 in Washington D.C. Ms. Madhvi Kataria, Deputy Executive Director represented Amcham India. The participants called on a number of Congressmen and raised issues concerning American businesses. The participants of APCAC were also briefed by Obama Administration officials besides trade and political experts. This was followed by a meeting of the APCAC Board of Directors.

Mumbai

Meeting of Amcham's HR Committee 2013-2014

Amcham organised the kick off meeting of its HR committee under the chairmanship of Ms. Anuranjita Kumar, Country Human Resources Officer, Citi on June 5, 2013. The meeting saw a strong representation of HR leaders who discussed challenges & best practices in the industry. Based on the results of a recently conducted survey of Amcham and recommendations of members, 3 sub-groups were created for focussed planning of objectives & activities for the year. On the occasion guest speakers from Deloitte made an interesting presentation on a survey (Deloitte) on Global and India Human Capital Trends'13 - "Resetting Horizons: Human Capital Trends 2013"

Interactive Discussion on 'Driving a Competitive Advantage – Values, Culture & Governance – The Key Differentiators'

Amcham India in partnership with LRN organised a workshop on 'Driving a Competitive Advantage – Values, Culture & Governance – The Key Differentiators' on Friday, June 14, 2013. The well attended workshop focused on How organizations can elevate behaviour — behaviour being the single most important differentiator for a company and brand in the 21st century marketplace. An esteemed panel which included (key note speaker) Mr. Mani Chacko, Senior Advisory Leader, LRN, Mr. Mahesh Krishnamurti, MD, Resources Global Professionals (I) Pvt. Ltd., Mr. Michael J Surface, Partner, PWC & Mr. Akhil Shahani, Director, Kaizen Private Equity shared their thoughts and experiences on the topic.

AMCHAM EVENTS



Meeting of Amcham's Supply Chain & Logistics Committee 2013-2014

Amcham organised the kick off meeting of its newly constituted Supply Chain & Logistics committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Anshuman Neil Basu, Regional Executive Director, Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals India Pvt. Ltd. on June 24, 2013. Senior representatives from the industry actively participated at the meeting to discuss and define the objectives, vision & activities of the committee as well as structure the next steps for active engagement of the members.



Kolkata

Annual Get-Together of the Eastern Chapter

Amcham Eastern Chapter had its annual get-together over cocktails and dinner at the Tollygunge Club on May 11, 2013. The evening brought together members, friends and supporters, including Government Officials of Amcham Eastern Region. The U.S. Consul General Mr. Dean R. Thompson and Mrs. Thompson attended the event. Mr. Aniruddha Lahiri the immediate past president of Amcham Eastern India and Vice Chairman NEB was presented a plaque from the U.S. Consulate General in appreciation of his service and guidance for 2012-2013.



Panel Discussion on "Inconvenient Truth – Saving Our Wetlands, a necessity, not an option"

Amcham Eastern Chapter in Association with Hyatt Regency hosted a breakfast panel discussion on **Inconvenient Truth –**



AMCHAM EVENTS

Saving Our Wetlands, a necessity, not an option. The event was held at Hyatt Regency on May 17, 2013.

The panellist were Moderator: Dr. Dipayan Dey Chairman of South Asian Forum for Environment, Panelist: Mrs. Bonani Kakkar, President Public United for Better Living in Calcutta (PUBLIC), Mr. Marc Lorenz, General Manager Hyatt Regency and Mr. Clinton Tad Brown, Political and Economic Officer of the U.S. Consulate, Kolkata.

Dr. Dey explained why the Wetlands are globally important; the impact of the Wetlands on Climate change and the importance of the Wetlands on the livelihood of more than hundred thousand people. Mrs. Kakkar spoke about the necessity of saving the East Kolkata Wetlands; she explained how the Wetlands prevent flooding, preserve biodiversity and are a source of fish and vegetables. Clinton Tad Brown spoke about how conservation and development have been balanced in the U.S. and Mr. Marc Lorenz spoke on the importance of how corporate can help in saving the Wetlands.

Amada Kidwai, Regional Director of Amcham Eastern chapter did the introduction, Mr. Gulshan Sachdev, Vice Chairman NEB gave the Welcome remarks and Mr. Joydeep Datta Gupta gave the vote of thanks.

Interactive Session with Mr. Vikram Sen, IAS Principal Secretary Tourism

Amcham Eastern Chapter hosted an interactive breakfast meeting on June 26, 2013 at the Bengal Club, and invited guest speaker Mr. Vikram Sen, IAS Principal Secretary, Tourism to speak on "Tourism in West Bengal."

Amada Kidwai, Regional Director of Amcham Eastern chapter did the introductions. Mr. Surajit Banerjee, Chairman Amcham Eastern Chapter in his welcome remarks said that the tourism industry is mostly in the private sector and is the best and fastest way of generating jobs. He further added that Tourism is a fiercely competitive market, requiring skills, talent, enterprise and a government that backs the industry.

Mr. Sen said that West Bengal can be a travellers' paradise. It has a number of hill stations, dense woods packed with exotic wildlife, beaches, seat of cultures, tea tourism and historical monuments as well as religious sites; one may say West Bengal is an epitome of everything "Incredible India."

The discussion highlighted tourism can be one of the primary revenue earners for both domestic and foreign earnings in West Bengal if the Government and Industry can put together a development package to improve the Tourism Sector. Mr. Sen

said that if Private Companies invest in tourism it would boost tourism in the State. He spoke on the merits of rural tourism. He said connectivity to rural areas had improved and that private investors would be investing in areas where there would not be much competition. He mentioned that there are attractive incentives and policies in place to attract private investment. He spoke about the safety of foreign tourist and said that the Government had taken several to ensure the safety of tourist.

Hyderabad

Amcham Breakfast Meeting on Healthcare

The Amcham Hyderabad Executive Committee met at the Office of S&P Capital IQ over a breakfast meet on May 13, 2013. The purpose of the meeting was to update the Excom members of the progress in the Healthcare session and also chalk out programs for the coming months.

Amcham Meeting with the ICRIER team

Seven members met with the ICRIER team to discuss on the "Impact of US FDI" in India on May 27, 2013. Dr. Ray made a presentation and members were requested to fill up questionnaires to help in the research being conducted by Amcham and ICRIER.

Chennai

Meeting with Kerala Chief Minister Mr. Oommen Chandy

Amcham organized a meeting with the Chief Minister of Kerala on June 5, 2013. This meeting was organized as a follow up to the Emerging Kerala investment summit meet held in September 2012. The Consul General Ms. Jennifer McIntyre led a delegation comprising prominent US companies operating in Trivandrum and Kochi for the meeting with the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister outlined the measures taken by the government to support US businesses in the state and offered to render all assistance to US companies. He requested the delegation to bring to his notice any grievance that required redressal.

We also hosted a dinner reception for the representatives of US businesses and the Consulate staff comprising American Consul General Ms. Jennifer McIntyre, Principal Commercial Officer James Golsen, and Christopher Rose, Consul, Non immigrant Visa section.

Amcham Welcomes New Members



Mr. Sudhir Kapadia
Partner & National Tax Leader
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AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN INDIA

Established in 1992, the American Chamber of Commerce in India (Amcham India) is an association of American business organizations operating in the country.

Amcham India has around 500 members, spread across the nation. The Chamber enjoys a close relationship with the U.S. Embassy, which supports its objectives and helps in fulfilling them. The incumbent U.S. Ambassador to India is the Honorary President of Amcham.

Mission

Amcham's principle objectives are to:

- Promote activities that encourage and stimulate investment by U.S. companies in the country.

- Support the business operations of its members.
- Encourage bilateral trade between India and the U.S.

These primary objectives are fulfilled by:

- Providing a forum for U.S. – based business organizations to discuss and identify common issues, economic and commercial interests in India and/or the U.S.
- Instituting Sectoral Committees which implement the primary objectives in their respective sectors.
- Reviewing policies and procedures in various sectors that affect the members as well as growth of foreign direct investment.

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Affiliations

Amcham is affiliated to the following Chambers in the U.S.:

- Chamber of Commerce of U.S.A in Washington, D.C.
- Asia Pacific Council of American Chambers of Commerce (APCAC)
- Amcham's in other countries.

Regional Chapters

Amcham's National Secretariat is based in New Delhi with six Regional Chapters in Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai.

American Chamber of Commerce in India

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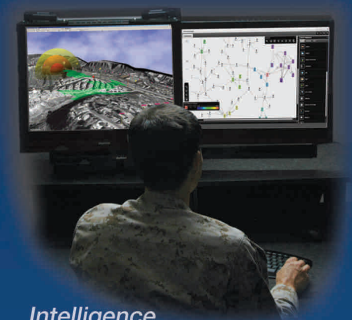
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